

Would You Like **FRIGS** With That?

Are you looking for a job with lots of opportunities and a fast-paced environment? If so, food service could be the right fit for you. Whether you want to earn some money part-time or build a career, this field offers a variety of options and can help you develop valuable job skills. Many people have enjoyed working in food service at some time or another, including this writer.

As Americans continue to spend an increasing portion of their food budget on meals out, demand for these workers is projected to rise.

Because these jobs offer flexibility and often don't require experience, this field has an extremely young workforce. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, one-fourth of its workers are ages 16-19, which is six times the average of all industries. High turnover means there are usually lots of openings, but competition is keen for jobs where earning potential is increased with tips, such as bartenders and waitresses. Some occupations, such as chef and food service manager, offer the chance to increase pay through additional training and experience. Let's look at a few of these careers.

Chefs and head cooks coordinate the work of kitchen staff, plan menus, order supplies, and design recipes. They may have other chefs reporting to them, and tend to be found in larger, higher-end establishments where a variety of food is served. To work in a fine dining establishment, these workers usually

need to have training through a vocational or culinary institute program. Competition for these jobs can be very intense, and the hours long. Some chefs go on to teach at culinary schools, open their own restaurants, work as caterers, or become food service managers.

Food service managers work in a variety of settings and are responsible for coordinating the daily operations of a restaurant. They are often in charge of staffing, scheduling, menu selection, maintenance, purchasing and ensuring that customers are happy. In larger restaurants, they may work as a team with the executive chef and several assistant managers. Because they are in charge of making sure everything runs smoothly, they are often the first to arrive for the day and the last to leave—12- to 15-hour days are not uncommon. Managing a busy restaurant can be hectic, and successful managers are calm, flexible, and able to handle stress. Job prospects will be best for candidates with a bachelor's degree in hospitality management, although some managers are trained in associate degree programs or promoted from other positions.

Besides being a flexible way to earn extra cash, food service occupations offer inexperienced workers the chance to develop important job skills that will prepare them for success in any future career. As a teenager flipping burgers and mopping floors in Wisconsin, I learned teamwork, customer service, time management, problem-solving and math skills (to name a few). And you know what? I also had a lot of fun! 

For more information on opportunities in food service, check out our website at jobs.utah.gov.





Utah Average Hourly Wage

Hosts and Hostesses \$7.80

Combined Food Prep. & Serving
Workers, including Fast Food \$7.30

Fast Food Cooks \$7.10

Chefs and Head Cooks \$15.80

Food Service Managers \$21.30